



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# Advisory Circular

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**Subject: NATIONALLY SCHEDULED  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
APPROVED INDUSTRY-CONDUCTED  
FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR REFRESHER  
CLINICS**

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**Date: 11/19/01  
Initiated By: AFS-840**

**AC No: 61-83E  
Change:**

**1. PURPOSE.** This advisory circular (AC) provides guidance for the preparation and approval of training course outlines (TCO) for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-approved industry-conducted Flight Instructor Refresher Clinics (FIRC). It also sets forth guidelines to assist qualified sponsors/organizations in obtaining approval for the use of a designated airman certification representative (ACR) employed solely by the FIRC sponsor. Adherence to this AC provides one acceptable method to obtain approval of an FIRC. FAA's approval of FIRC TCOs now in use will not be extended beyond their stated expiration dates unless such TCOs have been subsequently approved under the provisions of this AC. Effective August 4, 1997, the holder of a pilot school certificate issued under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 141 may also obtain approval to provide an FIRC program under the authority of part 141, appendix K, paragraph 11. The holder of a pilot school certificate who desires to offer an FIRC program under part 141 (see section 141.11(b)(2)(ii)) should refer to this AC which may be helpful as guidance in developing the TCO for FAA approval.

**2. CANCELLATION.** AC 61-83D, dated September 20, 1995, is canceled. As the FAA's approval of current FIRC TCOs expires, unless the TCOs have been previously approved in accordance with guidelines in this AC, FIRC sponsors must submit new TCOs in accordance with this AC in order to be authorized to present FAA-approved FIRC programs in the future. New sponsors or organizations who desire to present FAA-approved FIRCs should submit their TCOs to the General Aviation and Commercial Division, AFS-800, for review and approval consideration in accordance with paragraph 5, as applicable.

### **3. DEFINITIONS.**

**a. Sponsor.** An individual or an organization holding FAA approval under this AC to conduct FIRC programs meeting the requirements of 14 CFR section 61.197(a)(2)(iii).

**b. TCO.** An abbreviated list of training subjects offered in any one course of instruction.

**c. Curriculum.** The overall general content of a course of instruction.

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**d. At-Distance Learning or Out-Study Curriculum.** A curriculum in which the study, completion, and testing for all applicable course materials in a training syllabus is satisfactorily accomplished through correspondence.

**e. Training Syllabus.** A step-by-step (building block) progression of learning with provisions for review, evaluation, and testing at prescribed stages of learning. The syllabus defines the unit of training, states by objective what the student is expected to accomplish during the unit of training, shows an organized plan for instruction (building-block concept from the simple to the complex), and dictates the evaluation and/or testing process for either the unit or stages of learning to be presented.

**f. Lesson Plan.** The instructor's plan for teaching a unit of learning is a basic method of presenting an orderly flow of information to a student based on the student's way of learning.

**g. Lesson.** A period of instruction which imparts subject matter to the student.

**h. Stage.** A portion of the course consisting of a group of lessons, similar subject matter, or a particular day of instruction; i.e., day 1, 2, or 3, versus stage 1, 2, or 3.

**i. Airman Certification Representative (ACR).** An individual representing a specific FIRC sponsor, who is authorized to accept FAA applications for renewal of valid flight instructor certificates from successful graduates of that sponsor's program and issue temporary flight instructor certificates.

**4. BACKGROUND.** The FAA's Flight Instructor Refresher Program was initiated in 1965 to provide standardization in updating certificated flight instructors. Instruction was provided by FAA Aeronautical Center instructors until their participation was terminated on October 1, 1977. Since that date, the industry has assumed responsibility for continuation of the FIRC program. Industry-conducted clinics now provide one acceptable means whereby the holders of valid and current flight instructor certificates may, at the discretion of the FAA, renew their flight instructor certificates. Attendees who successfully complete these FAA-approved FIRC training programs may find them helpful in updating their knowledge of applicable regulations and operating procedures. FIRC participants may also gain exposure to new or unique teaching concepts and techniques directly associated with the duties and responsibilities of a certificated flight instructor. Attendance at these training programs will also provide qualified instructors an opportunity to meet or maintain their qualifications as chief flight instructors or assistant chief flight instructors for pilot schools certificated under part 141.

## **5. APPLICATION FOR FAA-APPROVED FIRC PROGRAMS.**

**a.** Sponsors or organizations who desire to conduct FIRC programs approved under this AC should, where applicable, submit an original and one copy of the TCO they plan to use, accompanied by a letter expressing that intent, to the Federal Aviation Administration, General Aviation and Commercial Division, AFS-800, 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20591. This correspondence should be submitted at least 90 days before any planned training under the course. This is to allow adequate time for FAA's review and approval. In no case should an FIRC be scheduled before the receipt of the approved curriculum and cover letter from AFS-800.

**b.** Applicants submitting FIRC programs are encouraged to be innovative and to explore the use of new techniques and teaching concepts as well as diversity of subject materials. The course should be both challenging and thought provoking. However, construction of the TCO should follow the general

guidance in this AC to ensure expeditious approval. The FAA seeks to ensure FIRC program standardization and emphasizes the coverage of program areas believed essential to enhance the knowledge, skills, and instructional capability of attending flight instructors.

c. At-distance learning or out-study FIRC curriculums will also be considered. However, sponsors who wish to submit at-distance learning or out-study curriculums should first present a clear and logical outline and description of the sequential elements of the training curriculum. Such sponsors must be prepared to provide an 800 number or evidence of facsimile capability to ensure a rapid and effective means of communications between the sponsor and enrollees to aid the enrollees in completing all approved course materials. It may be highly advantageous for a sponsor or organization that intends to submit an out-study or at-distance learning curriculum to meet with AFS-800 in advance to discuss the proposed curriculum in detail.

d. FIRC curriculums to be presented on the Internet will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Sponsors/organizations who wish to submit an Internet-based FIRC program are encouraged to provide graphical outline representations of their proposed training programs for review and consideration by AFS-800. The graphical representation of an Internet-based FIRC should contain a step-by-step description of how participants will enroll and access the support /study material for each lesson in order to effectively navigate through the course to completion. An Internet-based FIRC program should be prepared in accordance with applicable guidelines contained in this AC. Where a stated requirement is not considered applicable to an Internet-based FIRC program, that requirement should be identified and a brief reason for its inapplicability should be stated or an acceptable alternative provided. When approved by FAA, an Internet-based FIRC program will consist of a master copy of the FIRC program as it appears on the Internet. It may be highly advantageous for a sponsor or an organization that intends to present an Internet-based FIRC program to meet with AFS-800 in advance to discuss the intended program outline before committing time and effort to its development. This will assist in ensuring that the program developed follows a standardized process to the extent possible and might help reduce the time needed for its development, review, and approval by FAA. The graphical outline presented should contain, as a minimum, the following information considered specifically applicable to an online FIRC curriculum:

(1) The source of all study materials used to support the course element that would appear on the Internet, and a description of all drawings, mock-ups, demos, or links to be used in the course;

(a) A statement of how the sponsor intends to ensure that the minimum requirement of 16 hours of FIRC course subject material (study, completion, and test(s)) is assured;

(b) The methodology proposed to determine the identity of course participants at log-on and during navigation of a lesson, including intentional or non-intentional disruption of the lesson flow. Additionally, methodologies proposed to prevent multiple concurrent log-ons by a course participant for the purpose of viewing or printing material during inappropriate stages of the lesson.

(c) A statement of how the sponsor intends to ensure that flight instructor renewal applicants are not given access to any completion test(s) until the course materials, for which the test is applicable, have been satisfactorily completed;

(d) The methodology proposed to allow FAA access to course support materials, tests, and test results for the express purpose of review and monitoring as deemed appropriate by FAA;

(e) A statement that the sponsor will provide FAA a biennial listing of Internet FIRC program participants that contains, as a minimum, the sponsor's name and location, the student's name, identification number or code, the date(s) the course was administered, and the completion status of all course participants;

(f) Methodologies proposed to ensure data availability, integrity, confidentiality, and accountability for course materials, participant information, and lesson plans;

(g) The manner in which applications for flight instructor certificate renewal by Internet are to be processed;

(h) The manner in which revisions deemed necessary once the online FIRC is approved by FAA are to be reviewed by FAA before being included in the online program; and

(i) Such other information as may be considered necessary or appropriate by FAA during development of the online program.

e. FIRC TCOs presented for AFS-800's approval must contain a minimum of 16 hours of training which includes at least 13 hours of lessons on Core and Special Emphasis Subject areas listed in appendix 1. Core and Special Emphasis subjects must be identified clearly by title and content, to be considered for approval. Other acceptable subjects may be presented as Elective subject areas at the discretion of the sponsor. However, only subject areas considered applicable to the needs of certificated flight instructors will be approved by FAA.

**6. TCO STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS.** Each page of the TCO should be sequentially numbered or lettered, and dated as appropriate. Each page of the TCO must contain adequate space approximately 1 3/4 inches by 4 inches at the bottom to accommodate an approval stamp by AFS-800, unless approved as an internet program. TCOs submitted to AFS-800 for approval should contain at least the following information in the order outlined.

a. A cover page containing the full name and address of the FIRC sponsor/organization and the name, address, and current telephone and facsimile number of a point of contact may be included. It must be followed by a table of contents with a verbatim list of all lesson plans intended to be taught during the clinic. Lesson plans representing the required subject areas of appendix 1, and additional elective subjects selected by the sponsor should be clearly identified so as to be easily recognizable in specific subject and content by the reader. A revision summary page should follow.

b. A description of classroom facilities which gives attention to adequate climate control (air conditioning/heating), lighting, seating, work areas, distraction avoidance, and noise control necessary to provide an effective training atmosphere may be included.

c. A description of audiovisual aids that will be available for use including, but not limited to, chalk boards, slide and/or overhead projectors, video recorders/players, tape recorders, extension cords, mockups, aircraft components, and extra projection bulbs, chalk, and colored markers on hand to preclude unscheduled interruptions may be included, if one or more items fail to work properly during the course.

**d.** The name and qualifications of the chief instructor (and assistant chief instructor where requested). This individual should meet at least the certificate and experience requirements of a chief flight instructor required for a 14 CFR Part 141 pilot school course of training leading to flight instructor certification or be otherwise qualified by a state-approving agency to teach aviation related academic subject matters at an equivalent instructional level.

**e.** The qualifications of other instructors, lecturers, moderators, or panelists that will be used to present the sponsor's program. These persons need not be limited to certificated ground or flight instructors; however, they should be recognized experts in the subjects of their presentations or specialty areas.

**f.** The enrollment prerequisites for students planning to attend an FIRC approved under this AC should be stated. Only flight instructors whose certificates have not yet expired are eligible to renew their certificates predicated on full attendance and satisfactory completion of the FIRC program. Once a flight instructor certificate has expired, the flight instructor must successfully accomplish a practical test for the reinstatement of that certificate.

**g.** A description of the method to be used to accomplish remedial training and/or testing for persons who score less than 70 percent on tests administered to ensure satisfactory make-up and FIRC course completion before a graduation certificate is issued may be included. Sponsors who elect not to provide remedial training and/or testing to such attendees should include a statement in the TCO presented to the effect that remedial training and/or testing will not be provided and graduation certificates will not be issued to flight instructor attendees who fail to satisfactorily complete the full course requirements, including all tests administered.

**h.** A training program outline and record may be included to ensure that each instructor, lecturer, moderator, and/or panelist to be used is familiar with and understands the contents of the TCO with respect to the course, stage, lesson objectives, completion standards, the timeframes involved, and any changes made to the TCO. This training is the responsibility of the chief instructor and must be satisfactorily accomplished before the participation of each instructor, lecturer, moderator, and/or panelist, and at least once each 12 months thereafter, or following any significant change made to the TCO.

**i.** A comprehensive written test with answer key, including all source references, may be included. Test questions must be appropriate to the lesson plans and subject areas to be taught. The written test(s) should be revised at least once during each biennial approval period to reflect any changes made to the TCO. At least one test consisting of a minimum of 15 questions should be administered daily and must be administered as a closed book exam. A participant's successful completion of the FIRC is dependent upon a minimum score of 70 percent on each written or oral test administered.

**j.** A daily schedule, including the start and stop times for each lesson and the lesson title may be included. The sponsor is encouraged to submit more than one program schedule to provide flexibility in the order of lesson presentation. Daily schedules that are excessively long should be avoided because they lead to fatigue or inattention by the attendees. A program consisting of 8 hours of instruction with frequent breaks may provide for more attentiveness and better information retention than a program presented during a 12-hour day.

**k.** A training syllabus may be submitted. It should contain at least:

(1) A description of each lesson, both ground and/or flight, including its objectives, completion standards, and the measurable unit of accomplishment or learning to be derived from the lesson.

(2) The testing procedure, either oral or written, used to measure the student's proficiency, whether after each lesson, stage, day's end, or other unit of instruction.

(3) The time allotted for each lesson. (A lesson may be presented in increments of 1 hour; however, a minimum of 50 minutes of instruction must be presented for each of the 16 program hours scheduled.)

(4) A lesson plan for each lesson in the TCO, including the objectives, content, desirable or alternative instructional techniques, and completion standards.

(5) The testing or proficiency evaluation means used to measure the expected learning outcomes at the completion of each lesson.

**l.** A copy of the graduation certificate to be issued and a copy of a completion certificate, if one is to be used, may be included.

## **7. TCO DEVELOPMENT.**

**a. Subject Matter.** The curriculum should contain a broad outline of subject matters listed in appendix 1 to be taught during the course. A minimum of 16 hours of complete Core, Special Emphasis, and Elective subject matter lesson plans is required. Special Emphasis subjects are those directed by the Administrator. However, the sponsor may elect to include additional lesson plans as germane to the instructional process to provide a measure of flexibility in the program schedules to be presented. Each lesson plan should be constructed containing the following elements:

- Objectives
- Lesson Content
- Instructional Techniques/Alternatives (as applicable)
- Completion Standards

**b. Objectives.** Course, stage, and lesson objectives should describe in behavioral terms what student attendees are expected to know or be able to do at the end of a particular course, stage, or lesson.

**NOTE: The examples provided are to be used for reference only and should not be copied verbatim.**

(1) Course objectives should state in broad terms, the knowledge and skill goals to be reached by the student at the end of the course.

Example: At the completion of this course, the instructor attendee will be able to clearly communicate the course content and instruct pilot trainees at all certificate levels authorized.

(2) Stage objectives should be more limited and state the desired student goals in specific areas of knowledge and skill.

Example: The student will be able to pass a stage test with a score of at least 70 percent on the material covered during the preceding stage of instruction.

(3) Lesson objectives should clearly specify desired student outcomes and should be consistent with objectives of the course and stage.

Example: At the completion of this lesson, the student will be able to describe basic aerodynamic forces, including their effect on aircraft performance. The student will be able to communicate this information to trainees in a clear and concise manner.

**c. Lesson Content.** The content should identify the specific subject matter to be taught in developing the student's knowledge and/or skills necessary to meet the course, stage, lesson objectives, and completion standards. The content of each lesson should be presented in a manner that the instructor attendees will find useful in teaching pilots and should support the objectives, be arranged in a logical learning sequence, and be attainable within estimated stage and course times for the program. Reasonable variances in the timeframe to accommodate individual learning differences and other situations that may arise from time to time should be considered when determining the adequacy of the estimated timeframes of the course, stages, and lessons. Flexibility should be built into the time allotted for each lesson presentation for this reason. Section 61.197(a)(2)(iii) permits the renewal of a valid and current flight instructor certificate without taking the practical test if the applicant has successfully completed an FAA-approved FIRC program within the preceding 3 calendar months before the application is made. The FIRC program must consist of the specified number of hours of ground and/or flight instruction and comply with acceptable teaching standards and techniques appropriate to the TCO used. For the purposes of the FIRC, a program hour consists of 60 clock minutes. Each hour may include a 10-minute break after each 50-minute learning session. However, precourse registration, lunch periods, or graduation activities other than the distribution of graduation certificates may not be included as part of the creditable hours of instruction under section 61.197 (a)(2)(iii). The chief (or assistant chief instructor where designated) is responsible for ensuring the full attention of the attendees and that all lessons are completed, the lesson objectives are achieved, and the break privileges permitted are not abused.

**d. Instructional Techniques/Alternatives.** The sponsor should list the most desirable and /or alternative instructional techniques available that a certificated instructor may find effective in instructing students at various certificate levels authorized in the content of this lesson.

**e. Completion Standards.** The completion standards should state the observable or measurable level of knowledge and skills required of each instructor attendee at the end of the course, stage, or lesson. For example, the following statement, "The attendee must score a minimum of 70 percent on each written examination given," would combine both the observable and measurable levels of knowledge and skill.

## **f. Curriculum Requirements.**

(1) Curriculums presented for FAA approval consideration should consist of not less than 16 hours of ground and/or flight instruction presented in programs scheduled for not less than 2 nor more than 5 consecutive days. However, in view of recent advances in instructional technology and training techniques which may offer substantial benefits to flight instructor attendees, AFS-800 will consider for approval on a case-by-case basis TCOs to be presented in excess of the above timeframes.

(2) Additional exceptions for academic institutions and vocations schools are provided in paragraph 16c. A minimum of 13 hours of ground instruction and flight instruction in this curriculum must be based on mandatory Core and Special Emphasis subject areas selected from those listed in appendix 1. At the discretion of the FIRC sponsor, additional hours of instruction may be given on germane Elective subjects to complete the 16-hour requirement. However, subjects such as Business Aspects of Flight Instruction and similar topics are not considered germane to the certification of flight instructors or acceptable as FIRC subject matters and will not be approved. The curriculum may also contain Workshops and/or Discussion Forums structured to reflect the high standards of excellence expected of FIRC program sponsors authorized to issue graduation certificates for flight instructor certificate renewals.

## **8. TESTING PROCEDURES.**

**a. Conventional FIRC.** Depending on the number of attendees, the sponsor of a conventional FIRC program may, when considered practical, (such as with a small group of attendees) elect to administer oral quizzes during the daily clinic sessions to gauge understanding and retention of the subject matter taught. Such quizzes must reflect the knowledge acquired and subject matter covered during the clinic presentations. When written tests are utilized, at least one test consisting of a minimum of 15 multiple choice questions relating to the material covered should be administered daily as a closed book written exam. Attendees may not be given the written tests and allowed to complete them when class subject sessions are being presented. Tests should not be reviewed and corrected with attendees who score less than 70 percent in order to permit them to achieve a passing score. The attendees should not be permitted to compare responses while the tests are being administered or to grade their own tests. When practicable, it may be advisable to have the attendees leave the classroom as they complete the test(s) until all attendees have completed the test(s) being given. A minimum score of 70 percent is required for satisfactory completion of each test administered. The chief instructor or assistant chief instructor is responsible for ensuring that acceptable compliance with the above is achieved and that test integrity is not compromised.

**b. At-Distance Learning, Out-Study, or Internet FIRC.** Where an at-distance, out-study, or Internet FIRC is presented lesson-by-lesson rather than by stages as in a conventional FIRC program, a written test consisting of at least 10 multiple choice questions relating to the material covered in each lesson should be administered following that lesson. A minimum score of 70 percent is required for satisfactory completion of each test administered. A minimum score of less than 70 percent will require that the material for that lesson be restudied and the test for that lesson be retaken. A second score of less than 70 percent on that lesson will require contact with the course provider for instructions on how to proceed as an enrollee in the At-Distance Learning, Out-Study, or Internet FIRC.



## **9. TCO REVISION, AMENDMENT, OR DELETION.**

**a.** Sponsors or organizations approved to present FIRC programs will be required to revise the subject matters presented periodically to reflect the changing emphasis in subject matters currently listed in appendix 1, and other subject matters selected for periodic emphasis by FAA. All proposed changes to the TCO must be submitted to AFS-800 at least 45 days before their planned use. An original and one copy of the change(s), accompanied by a letter requesting approval of the change(s) should be submitted for approval. The revised material may not be included in the FAA-approved TCO until actual receipt of the material and cover letter from AFS-800 showing stamped approval. A change of chief instructor or assistant chief instructor will require notification to AFS-800 in accordance with the instructions contained in paragraph 13.

**b.** The method for revising, amending, or deleting materials in the TCO must:

- (1) Ensure approval chronology.
- (2) Include the effective date of change or revision.
- (3) Ensure ease in identifying changed or revised material.
- (4) Include entry of change on a revision summary page.
- (5) Include written guidance describing the revision procedure to be used by the sponsor.

**10. TRAINING AIDS AUTHORIZED FOR USE.** An FIRC approved under this AC may include the use of a variety of visual, aural, and static training aids to enhance communications and understanding between instructors and participants. Good instructional aids are devices that will assist the instructors in achieving desired goals in the teaching/learning processes by supporting or supplementing lesson material when used logically and intermittently. The aids used should be easily understood and compatible with the learning outcomes expected in the completion standards for the lesson. Visual aids that do not appeal to the visual senses of the viewer have little value in the learning process and should not be used. Recordings of sounds should be tested in advance for correct volume and quality in the actual environment in which they are to be used and speakers should be placed so as to ensure that all students seated in the class can clearly hear the information given.

**a.** Visual aids used should be clearly visible to the entire class. Lettering, illustrations, and diagrams should be large enough to be seen clearly by students farthest from the aids. Colors, when used, should be clearly contrasted, easily visible, and arranged in accordance with color spectrum sequence recommended for visual presentations. Eye pleasing colors should be used and harsh contrasts avoided. The most common error in constructing visual presentations is to attempt to include too much information on each visual, making it difficult to read and comprehend while listening to the instructor or moderator. The best results are attained by using visuals that are simple and contain a single thought or message. For example, the reproduction of an entire sectional chart projected on a screen to emphasize the airport information block would contain too much clutter to be effective. A followup visual which highlights the airport data block only would be much more effective in presenting the message to the clinic attendees and should be visible from any place in the room.

**b.** The effectiveness of instructional aids will be judged by their organization, sequencing, logic, and overall effectiveness in obtaining the objectives and standards prescribed in the training syllabus.

c. In recent years, an abundance of excellent new materials and instructional techniques in the field of training aids has been developed. These aids present many advantages for the FIRC programs. Each chief instructor should keep firmly in mind the teaching goals to be achieved. For example, presentations to flight instructor attendees should always be customer focused. For an instructor to be most effective, the instructor must thoroughly know the subject matter being taught. These presentations should be couched in terms of techniques that will help the instructor attendees be more effective as instructors rather than solely as a review of the required subject matter. The chief instructor or assistant chief instructor should continuously monitor the instruction being given and the participants' progress to ensure that a quality product is being effectively delivered and that the goals and objectives of the training syllabus continue to be met.

d. A review must be conducted to ensure that the participants meet the completion standards and fully understand the material presented. Such evaluation will determine whether the participant(s) should progress to the next lesson or review the subjects or procedures previously covered. Either the chief instructor or other authorized FIRC representative must:

(1) Personally determine through a review of the program or program element presented that the standards for each lesson presented have been attained; or

(2) In the case of a TCO presented under an extended program, personally determine and document by suitable record that the standards for each TCO program element have been attained.

## **11. GRADUATION CERTIFICATE ISSUANCE, COMPLETION CERTIFICATE ISSUANCE, RECORDS/APPLICATION TO FAA.**

a. A graduation certificate is issued to an applicant who holds a valid and current flight instructor certificate and who successfully completes an FIRC program approved under this AC. The organization or sponsor holding approval will ensure that, at the conclusion of each clinic, each successful graduate is issued a sequentially numbered graduation certificate containing at least the information listed in subparagraphs a(1) through a(5). A graduation certificate issued that does not contain the information listed herein in a legible form is invalid and may not be honored by FAA.

(1) The full name and address of the organization (or sponsor) holding FAA approval to conduct the clinic.

(2) The full name and address of the graduate.

(3) The date of issuance.

(4) A statement that the graduation certificate expires 3 calendar months from the date of issuance. (See 14 CFR Section 61.197(a)(2)(iii).)

(5) The signature of the chief instructor (or assistant chief instructor where designated).

b. A completion certificate may be issued to an attendee who is not a certificated instructor or to an instructor whose certificate has expired, provided the TCO permits his/her attendance at the FIRC. However, the completion certificate should make reference only to satisfactory completion of a course of training with no reference to attendance at an FAA-approved FIRC, and may not be used as a basis for certificated flight instructor renewal or reinstatement.

c. The FIRC sponsor must maintain a record of the complete name and address of all attendees and whether a graduation certificate was issued or denied. If a certificate was denied, the reason for the denial must be recorded. This record must be maintained for a period of at least 12 months.

d. Acceptance of a graduation certificate issued within the preceding 3 calendar months as the sole basis for flight instructor renewal under section 61.197(a)(2)(iii) remains the option of the FAA. Questions concerning the acceptance of a graduation certificate should be referred to AFS-800 at (202) 267-8196.

e. The capability of a Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) to administratively process flight instructor certificate renewals is based upon that office's work priorities and available staff. Therefore, to avoid placing an undue workload on a particular FAA FSDO, sponsors who do not have an ACR on their staff are encouraged to contact the FSDO having jurisdiction over the area where the FIRC is presented well in advance to determine the capability of that office to handle the anticipated number of applicants for renewal. It may be advantageous to advise the FIRC graduates that they should present their certificates to the local FSDO or to the FSDO having jurisdiction over their residential area for renewal, and that they should do so at intervals rather than in large numbers at any one office on a given day. These certificates should normally be presented to an FSDO before either the holder's flight instructor certificate or the graduation certificate issued has expired. However, where an FIRC sponsor's program is presented on the last Saturday or Sunday of the month, certification files of attending flight instructors whose certificate expired on the last Saturday or Sunday of that month may be submitted to an FSDO by the sponsor for renewal, provided that they are either hand carried to the FSDO by the sponsor within 5 working days, or if mailed, show a postmark no later than 5 working days after expiration.

f. Applications for flight instructor certificate renewals showing acceptable identification verification may be submitted by mail by the FIRC sponsor. If submitted by mail, the mailed applications must contain complete documentation of all items necessary for renewal and be accompanied by the unexpired flight instructor certificate and FIRC graduation certificate. **Except as noted in subparagraph e**, the applications must be mailed in time to reach the selected FAA FSDO before the expiration dates of either certificate. Otherwise, each applicant must present his/her certificate in person for identification compliance before the expiration of his/her flight instructor certificate or the expiration of his/her graduation certificate, whichever comes first. After processing, and provided the application is approved, the FAA will return the graduation certificate and a temporary flight instructor certificate to the applicant.

g. Applications for flight instructor renewals from instructors residing overseas who are unable to appear in person before a representative of the Administrator to establish their identity may establish their identity before either a notary public, the airman's U.S. Armed Forces commanding officer, a Consular official of the U.S. State Department, or an equivalent official of the foreign government. The procedure described in the following paragraphs is not meant to preclude the FAA from exercising its prerogative to require an instructor applicant for renewal to demonstrate his or her qualifications to hold a flight instructor certificate, if deemed appropriate .

(1) The applicant and certifying official must complete an appropriate identification form. This identification form must be attached to FAA Form 8710-1, Airman Certificate and/or Rating Application. Care must be taken to use the same personal document(s) shown to establish the applicant's

identity on both the identification form and the bottom of the reverse side of FAA Form 8710-1. The above procedure is also acceptable as a means of identification by an overseas applicant who enrolls in an at-distance, out-study, or Internet FIRC course and must be identified by the course sponsor.

(2) The applicant may send FAA Form 8710-1, the identification form, a valid FIRC graduation certificate, and a valid and current flight instructor certificate to an FSDO that has oversight of the FIRC. When these documents are sent to an FSDO, they must arrive before either the graduation certificate or the applicant's flight instructor certificate has expired in order to be accepted for renewal.

(3) The receiving FSDO will process the application for renewal in the normal fashion. FAA Form 8710-1, the identification form, superseded flight instructor certificate, and a temporary airman certificate will be forwarded to the Airman Certification Branch, AFS-760. Provided that the application file is complete and the FAA has no reason to require a demonstration of proficiency by the airman, a temporary flight instructor certificate will be issued and mailed to the applicant at the overseas address. The FSDO will return the graduation certificate to the applicant.

**12. SCHEDULING OF CLINICS.** The approved sponsor or organization shall notify AFS-800 of its intent to conduct FIRC programs not less than 45 days before the scheduled date of any clinic to permit FAA to make arrangements to monitor the clinic, as necessary. An annual listing of clinic locations and dates is highly desirable.

**13. CHANGE OF CHIEF INSTRUCTOR OR ASSISTANT CHIEF INSTRUCTOR.** The approved sponsor or organization shall notify AFS-800 when a change in the sponsor's chief instructor (or assistant chief instructor where designated) is to be made. This notification should be made at least 45 days before the change, but in no case later than 10 days after the change.

**14. CHANGE OF SPONSOR.** Should a change in sponsor occur due to sale or other reason and no change in personnel occurs, the sponsors (both old and new) must notify AFS-800 within 10 days. If, however, the change in sponsor involves any change in personnel of the FIRC TCO, authorization to conduct FIRCS is canceled until the new sponsor has obtained FAA approval as outlined under paragraph 5. Only initial approval will be considered until the provisions of paragraph 17c have been met.

**15. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH AN APPROVED TCO.** The failure of an organization or its representatives to comply with an approved course of training, or to effect such corrective action on a timely basis as deemed appropriate, is basis for denial or withdrawal of the FAA's approval and associated delegation of authority. When revision to a previously approved TCO or related corrective action is determined to be necessary, the sponsor will be given no more than 60 days to effect the necessary revision or corrective action, as appropriate. Should the sponsor not effect the necessary revision or corrective action within 60 days, FAA approval and authorization to conduct FIRC programs will be automatically withdrawn.

**16. GENERAL PROCEDURES REGARDING FIRCS.** Sponsors or organizations authorized to conduct FIRCS approved under this AC must maintain with AFS-800 a current mailing address, telephone and facsimile number, and a reliable point of contact. Sponsors are expected to comply with the following general procedures.

a. Each attendee and/or FAA observer/monitor will be provided an opportunity to review a copy of the FAA-approved TCO upon enrollment or during the registration of attendees on site. However, the test questions used by the FIRC for its lessons, stage, or course completion evaluations may be given only to the FAA observer/monitor on request. FAA participation by forum or by presentation may not exceed 2 hours maximum and is authorized only by prior agreement between the FAA representative(s) and the FIRC sponsor.

b. An FIRC program must be completed within the time periods specified in the approved TCO with all lesson and time requirements fulfilled during those periods. A graduation certificate may not be issued to a flight instructor attendee who has not successfully completed all curriculum requirements.

c. Academic institutions or vocational schools having state board of education approval and/or national accreditation for a curriculum leading to an associate or bachelor's degree, or to a certificate of completion in aviation science or similar course of study, may be approved on a case-by-case basis by AFS-800 to conduct an FIRC over a period of time in excess of the 2 to 5 consecutive days; i.e., semester or quarter.

d. The TCO may not contain material, nor may any materials be presented during the FIRC, that is prejudicial or contrary to the FAA's Federal regulations or prescribed procedures. An FIRC program is not a forum for disagreement with FAA policy or procedures. Rather, it should engender appropriate respect for the role of the FAA and a proper compliance disposition toward Federal regulations. Failure to meet this criterion may constitute grounds for withdrawal of FAA approval.

e. No sponsor may teach a part of his/her own FAA-approved TCO and a part of another sponsor's TCO. An approval to conduct an FIRC is limited solely to the TCO for which an FAA approval is held. Inclusion of any materials not approved in the TCO, regardless of their source, is prohibited.

f. Sponsors may use video and/or aural presentations to conduct part of the FIRC program. However, except for an at-distance or out-study curriculum submitted under paragraph 5c, or an on-line Internet FIRC presented under paragraph 5d, the sponsor must limit video and aural presentation use to not more than 50 percent of the entire course hours. The information provided by video and/or aural presentations in at-distance or out-study curriculums must be germane to the materials presented and each subject matter presentation must be moderated by an introduction and closure given by an instructor who is well versed in the subject matter and materials presented.

g. An applicant for renewal of a valid and current flight instructor certificate who, because of extenuating circumstances, fails to satisfactorily complete all of an FIRC sponsor's program approved under this AC may, at the discretion of the sponsor, attend a later scheduled FIRC program presented by that same sponsor. Upon full and satisfactory completion of that sponsor's FIRC at a later date, the attendee may be issued a graduation certificate. This procedure is not intended to permit an attendee's intentional absence from any part of an FIRC sponsor's program for other than unforeseen (emergency) circumstances.

**17. FIRC APPROVAL PROCESS.** TCOs should be submitted for consideration by AFS-800, as described in paragraph 5. The FAA will conduct a thorough review of the TCO and, if all the guidelines of this AC have been met, an initial or final approval, as appropriate, will be issued. Final approval may not be issued until a satisfactory evaluation of the FIRC has been completed by the FAA.

a. Finding that a conventional FIRC is in compliance with this AC, the TCO will be stamped approved in the space provided on each page. The TCO, when approved, will be accompanied by a cover letter from AFS-800 stating that initial approval to conduct FIRC programs has been given. The stamped TCO and cover letter constitutes authority to conduct FIRCs at locations either within or outside the United States. The initial FAA approval may be withdrawn at any time for sufficient cause, but, in any case, will become invalid on the last day of the 24th month after the month in which approval is given, unless continuation of approval has been granted. The approval of an Internet FIRC will be on a case-by-case basis and the FAA's approval will be signified by a cover letter appropriately identifying the TCO

b. Continuation of initial approval may be granted or extended beyond the scheduled expiration date for an additional 24 months if the sponsor has notified AFS-800 by letter of its desire to continue to provide FIRC programs at least 90 days in advance of the scheduled expiration date. In no case will a second extension of 24 months be granted unless the TCO has been updated to reflect current policy, procedures and regulations, and the FAA believes that final approval will be warranted.

c. FSDOs having geographic jurisdiction over the locations where FIRCs are presented are expected to monitor these programs to the extent possible. When an initially approved FIRC has been sufficiently monitored to determine that it is fully satisfactory, final approval may be given. When FSDO personnel have monitored an FIRC program and have found it fully acceptable, the FSDO should notify AFS-800 of this fact by letter. The letter must state the date, location, and findings relating to the program that was monitored. A letter stating that the complete FIRC program has been observed to be in conformance with the provisions of this AC and the FAA-approved TCO will be forwarded by AFS-800 to the FIRC sponsor. The letter and the approved TCO will constitute final approval of the sponsor to conduct FIRCs in accordance with this AC and the approved TCO. This final approval may be rescinded or withdrawn for sufficient cause, but will otherwise remain in effect until the last day of the month, 24 months after the month in which final approval is given.

## **18. FIRC RENEWAL, WITHDRAWAL, OR CANCELLATION.**

a. FIRC sponsors holding final approval who desire to renew their authorization to conduct FIRC programs beyond the date of original expiration must state their request by letter to AFS-800 at least 90 days before to the original expiration date. It is the sponsor's responsibility to ensure that its FIRC approval has not expired. Should the FAA's approval of an FIRC expire, a graduation certificate issued by the sponsor is invalid and may not be honored. Additionally, an ACR designation, if held, is no longer valid and may not be used.

b. Upon a finding by AFS-800 that the TCO reflects current AC requirements and that the FIRC's program is acceptable and in compliance with the AC and the FAA-approved TCO, AFS-800 will renew the approval and establish a new expiration date. Failure to comply with the FAA-approved TCO or this AC, or the failure to incorporate necessary changes to the existing TCO when so directed by AFS-800 in writing, may be sufficient cause for withdrawal of the approval.

c. If AFS-800 has not received a letter from the FIRC sponsor requesting renewal as described above or, if the sponsor requests to surrender its authorization, the FAA will return all materials originally presented by the applicant and accompanied by a letter stating that the sponsor's FAA approval has been canceled and no further clinics may be presented. If undeliverable, the FAA will not be responsible for retaining the TCO or locating the sponsor. To re-establish approval, the applicant must then comply with the original application procedures as outlined in this AC.

**19. APPLICATION AND APPROVAL OF AN ACR EMPLOYED SOLELY BY AN FIRC SPONSOR (ONLY FIRCS THAT HAVE BEEN GIVEN FINAL APPROVAL MAY APPLY FOR AN ACR).**

**a.** Except for FIRC sponsors who were previously authorized with an ACR designee on their staff, only sponsors or organizations presenting FIRCs that have received final FAA approval and have presented three or more FIRC programs during each 12 month period since approved, or that have a designated pilot examiner on staff, are eligible to apply for an ACR under this AC. Exceptions to the above will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will require that acceptable justification be provided in accordance with FAA Order 8710.3C, Pilot Examiner's Handbook, chapter 17.

**b.** Application for the designation of an ACR authorized to issue flight instructor certificate renewals to eligible course graduates of specific FAA-approved FIRCs should be submitted by letter to the FSDO having jurisdiction over the area in which the applicant's principal business office is located. The FSDO receiving the application will forward the request for ACR designation and the FSDO's recommendation through the appropriate regional office to AFS-800 for review and concurrence with the action indicated. When approved, an ACR designation should be forwarded to AFS-800 for inclusion in the FIRC sponsor's file.

**c.** The sponsor or organization presenting an FAA-approved FIRC that is eligible for designation of an ACR may request such designation for one or more responsible members or employees of the organization represented by submitting a letter of request containing at least the following information:

- (1) The original date of FAA approval of the sponsor to conduct the FIRC.
- (2) The number of programs given in the 12-month period immediately preceding the request for an ACR designation.
- (3) The number of attendees issued graduation certificates, the number of graduation certificates denied, and the reasons for the denials.
- (4) The number and location of programs scheduled and the expected number of attendees for the 12-month period immediately following the date of request for designation.

**d. General Eligibility and Experience Requirements.** A candidate employed solely by an FIRC sponsor, applying for designation as an ACR must:

- (1) Be at least 21 years of age.
- (2) Hold at least a commercial pilot certificate.
- (3) Hold a flight instructor certificate with at least one aircraft category rating, or hold a ground instructor certificate with an advanced rating.
- (4) Have a good record as a pilot in regard to accidents, incidents, and violations.
- (5) Have a reputation for integrity and dependability in the industry and the community.

(6) Have been employed as either a chief flight instructor, assistant chief flight instructor, or ground instructor of an FAA-approved pilot school, or have held a management or administrative position in a pilot school that is superior to the chief flight instructor designated for each course of training conducted by the school under examining authority, for at least 12 months immediately preceding application for designation as an ACR.

(7) Have a written recommendation from the FIRC sponsor when the candidate is a person other than the sponsor.

**e. ACR Privileges and Limitations.** An ACR is authorized to accept applications for the renewal of a valid and unexpired flight instructor certificate from FAA-approved FIRC graduates. The ACR may accept applications only from eligible course graduates of the FIRC named on the examiner's Certificate of Authority and Certificate of Designation.

(1) After reviewing the applicant's attendance/training record and eligibility, an ACR is authorized to renew the valid flight instructor certificate of an FIRC graduate who meets the requirements of 14 CFR Section 61.197(a)(2)(iii).

(2) An ACR is not authorized to conduct any knowledge or practical tests in connection with ACR duties.

## **20. ACR DURATION, RENEWAL, WITHDRAWAL, OR CANCELLATION.**

**a.** An ACR designation expires the last day of the 12th month following the month in which designation is made and may be renewed for a period not to exceed another 12 months on a recurring basis.

**b. Renewal of an ACR is not automatic.** Application for renewal of an ACR must be submitted to the FDSO of jurisdiction at least 60 days before the date of expiration. The request for renewal will again be coordinated with the appropriate regional office for concurrence before the renewal is granted. A copy should then be sent to AFS-800 when renewed.

**c.** FAA approval of an ACR may be withdrawn when the FIRC receives an unsatisfactory rating as the result of an FAA inspection or monitoring, when discrepancies are noted in the FIRC sponsor's program, or when the associated ACR's certification files are not corrected in a satisfactory or timely manner. Except in the case of an at-distance learning or out-study, or Internet FIRC program, the issuance of a flight instructor certificate renewal based upon successful completion of an FIRC when the applicant did not complete all renewal requirements within the 2 to 5 consecutive-day period will constitute cause for withdrawal of the ACR designation unless the issuance is based on satisfactory completion in accordance with subparagraph 16c or 16g.

**d.** The designation of an ACR who fails to apply for renewal, as described in paragraph 19, will be canceled. Failure of an FIRC sponsor to obtain ACR renewal or cancellation of the FIRC's authority will also cancel the designation of any ACRs in its employment. The reappointment process for an ACR will be the same as for original designation. Notification of cancellation of the ACR designation will be issued in accordance with appropriate FAA guidelines and procedures. The appropriate file(s) will be returned to the sponsor holding the ACR designation.



**21. DISPOSITION OF CERTIFICATION FILE.**

**a.** An ACR, unless authorized otherwise, forwards each certificate renewal file, complete with a signed FAA Form 8710-1, Airman Certificate and/or Rating Application, and the original of FAA Form 8060-4, Temporary Airman Certificate, within 5 days of the FIRC completion to the FSDO having jurisdiction over the area where the FIRC program was conducted. A copy of the ACR's letter of designation should be included with the submitted files when sent to other than the designating FSDO or to AFS-760.

**b.** When the FAA's Airman Certification and Rating Application (ACRA) program is used to create an FIRC attendee airman's certification file, the file must be forwarded directly to the Airman Certification Branch, AFS-760, within 5 days of the FIRC completion. ACRA certification files must be electronically uploaded within 5 days of the FIRC completion.

/s/

Louis C. Cusimano  
Acting Director, Flight Standards Service

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**APPENDIX 1. REQUIRED INSTRUCTIONAL SUBJECTS FOR  
FAA-APPROVED TCO CURRICULUMS**

These Appendixes and subject matters listed herein, along with minimum program hour requirements, may be revised periodically by FAA to reflect the changing emphasis determined by FAA for the renewal of flight instructor certificates under section 61.197(a)(2)(iii).

The subject areas described below are those in which instruction is required to be given by holders of authorization to present FAA-approved FIRC curriculums. These subject areas may be taught individually or they may be combined when the subjects are such that teaching them in combination is appropriate. However, these subjects must be taught in logical succession and in cohesive units consistent with the attendees' need to know and their ability to understand the subjects and their application to the instructional process.

The instruction presented must be clearly identifiable as relating to the required subjects listed herein. Not less than 13 hours of ground instruction in the 15 Core and Special Emphasis subject matters must be given in each FIRC program. At the discretion of the sponsor, additional subject matters germane to flight instruction may be presented as elective subjects in meeting the total 16-hour requirement. It is intended that not less than 30 minutes will be devoted to any one of the 15 individual Core and Special Emphasis subjects listed in this Appendix. The use of one or more 30-minute presentations devoted to the Core and Special Emphasis subjects will permit additional time to be devoted to critical subject areas given Special Emphasis when deemed necessary.

**\*CORE AND \*\*SPECIAL EMPHASIS SUBJECT AREAS**

1. \*Teaching Aerodynamics
2. \*Practical Test Standards
3. \* Federal Regulations
4. \*Flight Information Publications
5. \*National Airspace System
6. \*\*Weather Analysis (Scenario-based training should be given priority)
7. \*Human Factors
8. \*Fundamentals of Instruction
9. \*Flight Maneuvers and Procedures
10. \*Flight Safety
11. \*Recurrency/Transition Training
12. \*Collision Avoidance Procedures
13. \*Instructor Professionalism

14. \*\* Airport Operations

15. \*\* Controlled Flight Into Terrain

## RECOMMENDED SUBJECT OUTLINE

### 1. Teaching Aerodynamics

- a. Controlling Lift and Drag
- b. Stall/Spin Considerations
- c. Flight at Slow Airspeeds
- d. Limitations of Flight

### 2. Practical Test Standards

- a. Checklist Use
- b. Updated Amendments
- c. Night Flying (to include X/C)
- d. Instrument Flying (full and partial panel)
- e. Abnormal and Emergency Procedures

### 3. Federal Regulations

- a. Title 14 CFR Parts 1, 61, 91 and 141
- b. CFI Endorsements
- c. Application (FAA Form 8710-1)
- d. Automated Airman Certification and Rating Application (ACRA)

### 4. Flight Information Publications

- a. FAA Publications and Advisory Circulars
- b. Aeronautical Charts and Symbols

### 5. National Airspace System

- a. Airspace Classification
- b. Special Use Airspace
- c. New RNAV Instrument Approach Charts

## 6. Weather Analysis

- a. Formats and Aids Available to Pilots
- b. Preflight Weather Acquisition
- c. Scenario Based Go-No-Go Decisions
- d. En route Weather Acquisition
- e. PIREPS/Thunderstorms/Windshear/Microbursts
- f. Analyzing Special Weather Phenomena and Hazards
- g. Set and Adhere to Personal Wx Minimums

## 7. Human Factors

- a. Aeronautical Decisionmaking
- b. Judgment Training/Risk Assessment
- c. Cockpit Resource Management
- d. Avoiding Hazardous Operations

## 8. Fundamentals Of Instruction

- a. The Learning and Teaching Process
- b. Effective Communications
- c. Critique and Evaluation
- d. Planning Instructional Activity
- e. Instructor Responsibilities

## 9. Flight Maneuvers and Procedures

- a. Aircraft Familiarization
- b. Basic Principles of Flight
- c. Analysis and Performance of Maneuvers
- d. Traffic Pattern Entries/Exits

## 10. Flight Safety

- a. Flight Safety Publications

- b. Incident/Accident Analysis/Stall Spin Awareness
  - c. Aircraft Weight and Balance
  - d. Performance Charts and Graphs
  - e. Avoiding Hazardous Operations
11. Recurrency/Transition Training
- a. Regulatory Requirements
  - b. Training Goals and Objectives
  - c. Flight Review and Wings Program
  - d. Instructor Qualifications
  - e. Training Standards/Syllabi
  - f. Documentation
12. Collision Avoidance Procedures
- a. See and Be Seen Concept and its Limitations
  - b. Visual Scanning Techniques
  - c. Accuracy in Position Reporting by Pilots
  - d. Monitoring Appropriate Communications Channels
  - e. Situational Awareness
13. Instructor Professionalism
- a. Training Oversight
  - b. Student Supervision
  - c. Teaching By Example
  - d. Aircraft Checkouts
  - e. Practical Recommendations
14. \*\*Airport Operations
- a. Airport/Runway Familiarization (to include signs and markings)
  - b. Review of Notices to Airmen

- c. Making the Aircraft Visible
  - d. Runway Incursions
  - e. Land and Hold Short (LAHSO)
  - f. Situational Awareness
15. \*\*Controlled Flight Into Terrain
- a. Avoiding Distractions
  - b. Maintaining Situational Awareness
  - c. Alternative Actions

**NOTE: Additional sponsor-selected subjects (elective subjects) germane to the needs of certificated flight instructors may be added under the provisions of paragraph 7 of this AC.**

**APPENDIX 2. SAMPLE SEQUENCE OF TCO CONSTRUCTION**

1. Cover page of TCO identifying the FIRC sponsor by name, address, and approval date.
2. The name, address, and telephone and/or facsimile number of a continuously available point of contact.
3. TCO table of contents with verbatim list of all subjects to be presented with subject matters addressing “Core” or “Special Emphasis” subjects clearly identified (Example: \*Core, \*\*Special Emphasis).
4. A daily schedule showing start and stop times for each lesson to be presented.
5. A revision summary page.
6. A description of the classroom facilities and training aids to be used.
7. The name and qualifications of the chief instructor, and other instructors, lecturers, moderators, or panelists.
8. Course enrollment prerequisites and remedial training policy of the sponsor.
9. A course overview and acknowledgment of FIRC procedures required to be addressed in each TCO by this AC.
10. A statement of acknowledgment that each instructor , lecturer , moderator , and/or panelist will be familiar with and understands the content of the TCO in accordance with paragraph 6h of this AC.
11. Course, stage, lesson objectives, and completion standards.
12. An index of alternate lesson plans if alternate lesson plans will be used.
13. Review and evaluation questions with source reference and answer key.
14. A sample graduation certificate (and completion certificate if one is to be provided).